

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

**List of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A fender formed from a rubber composition selected from the group consisting of natural rubber, synthetic rubber and mixtures thereof, wherein said rubber composition has a rate of change of compressibility  $R_{-30}/R_{23}$  of not more than 1.3 (where  $R_{-30}$  denotes a maximum reaction force at  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  as determined by compressive test and  $R_{23}$  denotes a maximum reaction force at  $23^{\circ}\text{C}$  as determined by compressive test) and/or a rate of change of compressibility  $R_{60}/R_{23}$  of more than 0.90 (where  $R_{23}$  denotes the maximum reaction force at  $23^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $R_{60}$  denotes a maximum reaction force at  $60^{\circ}\text{C}$ ).

2. (Previously Presented) The fender according to claim 1, wherein said rubber composition has the rate of change of compressibility  $R_{-30}/R_{23}$  of not more than 1.3 (where  $R_{-30}$  denotes the maximum reaction force at  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  as determined by compressive test and  $R_{23}$  denotes the maximum reaction force at  $23^{\circ}\text{C}$  as determined by compressive test), thus imparting the fender with a sufficient compressive energy absorptivity for functioning as a shock absorber in a low-temperature range.

3. (Previously Presented) The fender according to claim 2, wherein said rubber composition has:

- (i) a rate of change of rigidity modulus  $G_{-30}/G_{23} < 1.38$  and  $\tan\delta < 0.07$  as determined by dynamic shearing test (where  $G_{-30}$  and  $G_{23}$  denote dynamic moduli of rigidity at  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  and at  $23^{\circ}\text{C}$ , respectively, as measured under the conditions of a frequency at 0.3Hz and a displacement of 2.5mm); and
- (ii) a rate of change of elasticity modulus  $E^*_{-30}/E^*_{23} < 2.3$  and  $\tan\delta < 0.10$  as determined by dynamic tensile test (where  $E^*_{-30}$  and  $E^*_{23}$  denote dynamic moduli of elasticity in tension at  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  and at  $23^{\circ}\text{C}$ , respectively, as measured under the conditions of a frequency at 10Hz and a displacement of  $50\mu\text{m}$ ).

4. (Previously Presented) The fender according to claim 1, wherein said rubber composition has the rate of change of compressibility  $R_{60}/R_{23}$  of more than 0.90 (where  $R_{23}$  denotes the maximum reaction force at  $23^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $R_{60}$  denotes the maximum reaction force at  $60^{\circ}\text{C}$ ), thus imparting the fender with a sufficient compressive energy absorptivity for functioning as a shock absorber in a high-temperature range.

5. (Previously Presented) The fender according to claim 4, wherein said rubber composition has:

- (i) a rate of change of rigidity modulus  $G_{60}/G_{23} > 0.9$  and  $\tan\delta < 0.11$  as determined by dynamic shearing test (where  $G_{60}$  and  $G_{23}$  denote dynamic

moduli of rigidity at 60°C and at 23°C, respectively, as measured under the conditions of a frequency at 0.3Hz and a displacement of 2.5mm); and  
(ii) a rate of change of elasticity modulus  $E^*_{60}/E^*_{23} > 0.7$  and  $\tan\delta < 0.14$  as determined by dynamic tensile test (where  $E^*_{60}$  and  $E^*_{23}$  denote dynamic moduli of elasticity in tension at 60°C and at 23°C, respectively, as measured under the conditions of a frequency at 10Hz and a displacement of 50 $\mu$ m).

6. (Previously Presented) The fender according to claim 1, wherein said rubber composition contains 20 to 80 parts by weight of carbon black and 0 to 20 parts by weight of softener based on 100 parts by weight of a base rubber material.

7. (Previously Presented) A method for producing a fender from a rubber composition as a base material, wherein the rubber composition is prepared as an elastic base material and has a rate of change of compressibility  $R_{-30}/R_{23}$  of not more than 1.3 (where  $R_{-30}$  denotes a maximum reaction force at -30°C as determined by compressive test and  $R_{23}$  denotes a maximum reaction force at 23°C as determined by compressive test) and a rate of change of compressibility  $R_{60}/R_{23}$  of more than 0.90 (where  $R_{23}$  denotes the maximum reaction force at 23°C and  $R_{60}$  denotes a maximum reaction force at 60°C).

Claim 8 (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) The fender according to ~~claim 8~~, claim 6 wherein the synthetic rubber is butadiene rubber or styrene-butadiene rubber.